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ABSTRACT

A group of three brief conference papers, all concerned with methods to help Limited English Proficient (LEP) students succeed, is presented in this document. The first paper, "Integrated Content Language Approach" (Jose Galvan), suggests that LEP students who are at the intermediate level or beyond will benefit from programs integrating content and language instruction because their transitional progress will have the added advantage of a strong affective element. Interest in the language being used will rise, and their progress in the subject matter will continue. The second paper, entitled "The Eastman Success Story for Helping Limited English Proficient Students Succeed" (Bonnie Rubio), describes the Eastman Curriculum Design Project implemented in seven schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District in California. The program focuses on language separation: subject matter is taught either in Spanish, sheltered English, or mainstream English. The goals of the program are high-level oral fluency in English and academic achievement. The third paper, "Helping Limited English Proficient Students Succeed" (Amado Padilla), asserts that the stress that LEP children experience is very different from the stress that children generally have. External and internal mediators, which buffer the impact of stress, can be developed; if LEP students learn how to cope with stress, they will be less at risk of dropping out. (BJV)

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# PROMISING PRACTICES

## Helping Limited English Proficient Students Succeed

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## PROMISING PRACTICES

### Integrated Content Language Approach

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I am going to discuss the rationale for integrating content and language instruction, with particular reference to the school. It is my assumption that the integrated approach is appropriate, regardless of whether your educational programming emphasis is on the teaching of language or on the teaching of a specific subject content such as math or physical science. I feel that Limited English students who are at the intermediate level or beyond will benefit from these programs because their transitional progress will have the added advantage of a strong affective element. Interest in the language being used will likely rise dramatically, and, additionally, their progress in the subject matter of the course can continue even as their language is developing.

Let me begin by describing what I see as the changing nature of education for the Limited English student in the U.S. The advent of bilingual education in the late 60s brought with it a national movement to address the specific needs of the non-English speaking student and other previously disenfranchised language minorities. This was an extension of the attempt to fix the educational inequities that were pervasive before the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and a result of the separate but equal mentality that had prevailed previous to its passage. The major focus of the movement was the development of both first and second languages. It was the motivation for the bilingual education programs that sought to address the needs of linguistic minority youngsters, and for the few programs that attempted to provide Black children access to standard English.

The preponderance of bilingual education programs were supported by funds outside of the local school district. This suggests that educational planners viewed the needs of the students for whom these programs were patterned as outside the basic core curriculum; language instruction was handled as remediation. Thus, the needs of the non-English speaking student were not immediately institutionalized. There was also minimal communication between

the language specialist, the teacher responsible for English literacy training, and the content teacher.

Things are very different in the 80s. While educational equity for language minority youngsters is very much a national priority, the manner of addressing these needs has shifted from an educational policy based on an affirmation of a pluralistic, language-diverse American populace, to one which is focused on mainstream education and driven by a push toward assimilation.

The 80s have seen a movement toward increased state and local autonomy in education. The Federal Department of Education relinquished to the states and local school systems its responsibility for addressing the needs of language minority students, a direct reflection of the priorities of the executive branch. The Congress and the judicial branch have also acted in favor of less federal direction in addressing language minority issues. There is an increased emphasis on basic skills and literacy for teachers and students. As we are well aware, several states have invoked minimum competency tests in these areas for both teachers and high school graduates. Mathematics and language arts skills are periodically assessed at designated grade levels on a state-wide basis in many parts of the country, which is a move toward greater accountability. And concordant with this back-to-basics movement is the push toward quicker mainstreaming of language minority children.

I believe traditional mainstream content instruction is inappropriate for language minority children. Although there is a trend toward process teaching that makes use of hands-on activities and a greater awareness of the student`s cognitive functioning and development, in most cases traditional content instruction may still be characterized as consisting of a teacher-centered lecture format. Here the emphasis is on the textbook as a primary source of content and on summative evaluation through paper and pencil tests. These features of the traditional mainstream content classroom assume a student population that is fully proficient in the language of instruction. They assume that the students are at or close to grade level in basic literacy skills and that they have mastered a full range of requisite concepts and vocabulary, including items normally associated with the informal registers of the home and playground.

Under the best of circumstances, a second-language speaking student cannot be expected to possess the same linguistic

competence as students who have had continuous English language development from birth. In fact, this juncture between the language and literacy assumptions of the mainstream programs and the actual reality for language minority students is evident in several ways.

First, other than the language itself, the typical academic lecture provides a minimum of clues to help the student derive meaning and, therefore, understand the content. Second, language minority students can be expected to achieve various degrees of literacy in English. In most cases, these students are not able to read on, or near, their grade level, so it is unlikely that they will be able to extract the main points of the subject matter. Finally, because the ability to write cogencies and lucid interpretations of content material is one of the principle educational objectives in school, the evaluation techniques that prematurely place an emphasis on writing skills may not fully enable the language minority students to demonstrate their knowledge of content material.

The convergence of research from second language acquisition and education supports an integrated content language approach. Recent advances in language acquisition theory have facilitated an understanding of the processes involved in second language acquisition. We now understand, more clearly than ever, that language is acquired through meaningful communication in a variety of naturalistic settings. We know that in both first and second language acquisition, a key appears to be how well the linguistic input is received. Thus, language development is dependent, to a large degree, on the extent to which the linguistic input results in a genuine exchange of information and on the extent to which the input corresponds to the learner's developing linguistic abilities. Researchers in Canada and the U.S. have demonstrated that a second language can be acquired successfully simply by making content instruction meaningful for non-native speakers of the language. Subject matter teaching, when it is comprehensible, is language teaching.

Even though the trend in U.S. public schools appears to be toward a focus on student achievement in the cognitively demanding subject areas, the challenge for American schools is to provide access to higher level subject matter for our ever increasing number of students with special needs. These students include newly arrived immigrants and our already linguistically diverse student population, both of whom exhibit a lack of language and literacy in English.

Why have we become so concerned with this issue at this point in time? There are at least two answers to that question. The first is that we in California have come to realize that some dramatic shifts in demographics are just around the corner. For the past couple of decades, we have noted the steadily increasing numbers of language minority students entering the educational setting. That pattern is predicted to continue in the foreseeable future. Another pattern is a trend toward more heterogeneous student populations in our schools. While there are many population areas in our state that continue to reflect a clustering of ethnically and linguistically homogeneous people, the demographic trends indicate that we can expect more mixing in our student populations. Furthermore, we can expect more newly arrived immigrants that represent diverse language groups, and they will not be arriving in large enough numbers to warrant special programs. Finally, the immigration pattern suggests that the language minority students will begin to exhibit a wider range of backgrounds in education and socioeconomic status. In fact, there is already ample evidence of these trends in our schools.

When you consider that in the 21st century in California some eighty to ninety percent of the language minority student population will be either Latin American or Asian, it's clear that it is only a matter of time before they begin to wield an increasing political power. We will also see a broader range of mobility expectations than has ever been evident before. All of these factors present a strong image of change.

We now feel that we are able to make a significant difference in the education of these populations. Educational planners must be concerned with the fact that traditional approaches to providing academic content may be inappropriate for increasing segments of the school population. In fact, in some urban settings, the traditional instruction may be less than optimal for a majoity of the students. Thus, content instruction will have to be modified to meet the linguistic and academic needs of these new students.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

### The Eastman Success Story for Helping Limited English Proficient Students Succeed

Bonnie Rubio
Los Angeles Unified School District

I am here today to talk about the Eastman Curriculum Design Project. In 1981, five case-study schools were funded under the California Department of Education. I will share a little bit about what is now going on in the Los Angeles Unified School District as a result of that initial project.

The basic philosophy of bilingual education was put together by the State Department. They put together a curriculum design that reflected all the latest information, research and theory. The purpose of the case-study schools was to take theory and put it into practice with real live children and in all kinds of varying conditions. Eastman Elementary, a school with 1,800 students located in the heart of Los Angeles, was identified as one of those case-study schools. I was then the principal of that school.

I was principal from 1980 to 1985. In 1985, I was pulled out of that position by the Los Angeles School district, and was assigned as an administrator, put in charge of replicating the changes that occured at Eastman Elementary in seven other schools. The Los Angeles School District, which has been very supportive and is currently supportive of bilingual education, funded my position and those of several consultants to change the world in these seven schools. We are now in the process of implementing change for about 10,000 students in Los Angeles Unified. The schools are located throughout the district, all the way from San Pedro into the San Fernando Valley.

Our philosophy centers on language separation. Traditionally there has been a concurrent approach to instruction in bilingual education that requires on-going translation. We are implementing language separation because we feel it is much more effective. It is an effective use of the resources as well as a more effective use of time during the school day. There is no translation. Subject material is either in English or in Spanish. English is either sheltered English, a version that is modified to make it more understandable, or

mainstream English. All training is directed by that approach, as is the transfer of skills, so that the higher level skills transfer and are consistent throughout the design.

One of the main goals of the project is high-level oral fluency in English. Academic achievement is another target area, self image another. Obviously, if a student does not feel good about himself in school he is not going to do too well, and that affects the academic achievement.

As we structured and began to implement the theory and the curriculum design, we found that we were able to put together a program that was good for all the children in the school, not just the Limited English Proficient children. Over a five-year period, those efforts resulted in most students graduating from elementary school at grade level, at the fiftieth percentile, although eighty to ninety percent of the students who had entered school had started kindergarten as Spanish-speaking. These achievement results began to be noticed throughout the East Los Angeles community. The change was gradual; it was not magic. The achievement was the result of teacher training and good-quality, consistent programs.

Sometimes people are not sure what causes positive change; I feel there are a few key components. One is the school organization. As you begin to implement any project or any program, there needs to be a consistent, school-wide organization so teachers will know what the program is, and so the articulation between grade levels is clear. The teachers need to know what is expected of them and they need to get the training to support the program that will be implemented in the classroom.

Our goal was to have a quality program and an equal educational opportunity for both English and Spanish classes. We ended up with English classrooms, Spanish classrooms, and a portion of the day when students were mixed together and all were taught in English. The teachers were teamed and departmentalized so the monolingual teachers could teach a classroom in English, bilingual teachers could teach in Spanish, and both had responsibility for limited English and English only during art, music, and P.E. Another important concern was the issue of oral language development for all of the students, not just the LEP students. All of the students,

including the English-only students, needed that opportunity to address the development of better oral English skills.

Scheduling was another key area. People have a tendency to focus on the basics. We wanted children to have the opportunity to apply skills. We didn't want them to learn to read and then never get a chance to use their skills. Our interest was in providing a fully balanced curriculum regardless of the language. This occurs only when time is budgeted and each subject area is identified. Teachers, in some cases, had been teaching two hours of reading, maybe a little bit of ESL, some math, and some other things, but it was often inconsistent. We worked with them, implementing a pool for a balanced curriculum, and we were able to develop a good quality training process to help teachers understand how to deliver a balanced curriculum. Many teachers had not taught music for a long time, or perhaps had skipped science because it was not an area of strength. So we did a great deal of teacher training to shore up skills in subject areas.

One of the important things that happened in the organization of this program was that we were able to take the credentialed bilingual teachers and concentrate them with the limited-English students, rather than using the traditional approach of one-third, two-thirds. Separating the languages required organization in a different manner. It ended up being a much more effective use of resources. We also took a look at the resources in the schools and how they were being utilized. When we first started two years ago, we found there was a very inconsistent use of resources in the existing programs of the seven replication schools. Sometimes teachers weren't even sure what support was available; sometimes it was unrelated to the basic program. Often the texts in use did not reflect the composition of the school. We found a school where children were learning to read in Spanish, and that was all they had to read. We went into a library in a school that had 1,000 LEP students, but only two shelves of Spanish library books. Those are the things you have to begin to look at.

The project's design places the limited-English child--usually Spanish speaking in California--in a program where the four academic subjects are taught in the primary language, and art, music, and P.E. are taught in English, using the natural approach. We go into a strong, consistent ESL program. Gradually we move into the sheltered English approach, shifting math first. The goal, obviously,

is to move the entire curriculum into English, but we do not do it at the expense of academic development. We are not in a hurry, and that seems to pay off. Children who had gone through the program were actively involved in academic learning on grade level, not just sitting in the back of the room trying to figure out what was going on or trying to copy from somebody else. We also incorporated into the curriculum design a place for the native English-speaking child. All children in the school were assessed in English fluency. Monolingual teachers also became part of the total package. The structure proved to be quite effective, and the training the teachers received also proved to be effective.

Courses in the school were based on the student's primary language, his English-language fluency, and reading levels. Children were transitioning from primary language to sheltered English to mainstream English, over a period of years, at grade level. Often children transition at a pre-verbal level in English basal series because the criteria for transition is so low. As a result, students don't develop high level skills. They are cut off at the pass. This was happening to us in 1981, and the State Department helped us realize that some of the criteria we were using were too low.

In terms of replication, there are a number of programs that people are attempting that are based on the work that was done initially by the case study program. These schools are involving huge numbers of children, and the existing principals are getting the kind of training that it takes to be effective school leaders. After working two years with the seven schools in the replication attempt, we noticed a spread that was directly related to the quality of the instructional leadership of the principal on site. Most of us know that feeling when you walk into a school or onto a campus, when you know if there is a philosophy, you know if there is consistency, you know if teachers have high expectations. When we first walked into some of these schools, we could not find ESL. They said they had it, but it was very difficult to find.

The district has also funded an extensive evaluation design. We are taking a look at the factors that effect quality programs, such as teacher training, leadership expertise, teacher attitude, and administrative attitude. We are using parent and student surveys, and we are taking a look at the academic progress over time. We are finding in the original data that some of the teachers who were most satisfied with the old program of one-third, two-thirds structure and

concurrent instruction were monolingual teachers, and that was surprising. Why would monolingual teachers be satisfied with having a bilingual class? We began to wonder if they were satisfied because they were not really responsible for those children. Perhaps the aides were doing the teaching; things like that happen in the classroom.

We have worked very closely with the seven replication schools. They are all operational, and the organization of their programs is based on what happened in the original Eastman design, the original program. We have worked very carefully to help the teachers change their attitudes, to raise their expectations, to get the administrators involved in instruction, to get them involved in the training, and to have teachers involved in curriculum committees. We believe student achievement has to go up because the quality of teaching is going up, and because the materials provided are going to reflect what is needed in the schools.

There is a great deal to be learned from the Eastman replication and its evaluation. We hope to create seven models that other schools in the district will be able to replicate as well. Los Angeles is currently interested in further expansion, and I am trying to convince them that one of the best ways to go is through administrative training. If we can really define these seven schools and use them as key models, we can then take them to those administrators that have the interest and the desire to improve the quality of their schools. We also offer administrative leaders the opportunity to do some training. That is what I hope I can do next year.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

### Helping Limited English Proficient Students Succeed

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I am going to speak about helping the LEP student succeed, but I am going to take a different approach. I am going to present a model that reflects, I think, the kind of situation that really exists for LEP children. I'll do that from the standpoint of my own multi-disciplinary interests: educational outcomes and how a child becomes bilingual. I have tried to bring together aspects of developmental and clinical psychology, anthropology, sociology, and education.

What are the consequences for the LEP child who will ultimately be a member of adult society, and what are the implications of those consequences for education? One of our concerns is how to reduce the large number of LEP students who are not succeeding as well as other students. The issue has become one of academic achievement. How do we get these kids through high school, how do we get them through college? How do we make successful educated people out of this population?

I am going to describe a model that approaches this problem from a different perspective. I am going to use what may be some new terminology, and I am going to make some assumptions. This model assumes that kids, like adults, have stressers in their lives, so I am going to approach this, in one sense, as a developmental psychologist.

The stress that LEP kids encounter is very different from the stress that kids generally have. Kids can encounter many kinds of stress: the death of a pet, the death of a parent, the death of a grandparent, moving from one community to another, changing schools, a new baby sitters, divorce. All are stressers. LEP kids are also affected by what we call culture stress, stress caused by being in an unfamiliar culture. Not knowing the language and not knowing the customs play a big part in culture stress. Much of the stress is also related to socioeconomic class. In our work, we try to understand this from the standpoint of LEP kids, and we try to

structure a supportive environment that will reduce the stress due to culture, the stress due to class, and the stress due just to living. We now have a pretty good idea of what is going on in terms of defining and measuring stress.

Another part of the model incorporates external mediators. External mediators are the things in an adult's or a child's environment that serve to buffer the impact of stress. The school, parents, counselors, and peer group can be external mediators. Clubs and other kinds of activities can also offer social support to kids as they try to buffer stress. Internal mediators are another part of the model. Internal mediators are what goes on within a child, and the idea is to determine how stress impacts on the internal workings, the personal characteristics of the child.

Some of the kids that come from very high-risk backgrounds don't drop out of school. They do very well in school, they do very well in college, they go on to graduate or professional school, and they do very, very well. They are invulnerable. If we could understand that dynamic, if we could discover what makes these kids invulnerable, we might be able to get more kids to develop invulnerable personality characteristics.

Another very critical aspect is that of appraisal. The appraisal component is a cognitive component; it is how we think about our situation. A stresser is a stresser only when a situation is appraised as stressful. By using an appraisal measure you can determine whether a child or an adult views a particular situation which is typically called a stresser as, in fact, being stressful. People constantly appraise any situation that produces even a little stress. Even little kids go through this cognitive process, this method of evaluating their world. The outcome is a form of behavior that, for purposes of this model, we will call Kopian. The outcome of this process of stress, external mediators, appraisal, and internal mediators is a Kopian response. Kopian responses can be listed in at least three broad categories: direct action, when you appraise something as stressful and you take direct action to change the impact it has on you; indirect action; and, no action at all. You can see examples of all three types of responses everyday in the people around you and in yourself.

As we build programs that focus on language development, cognitive development, and skill building in the academic areas, we

should also think about this very important internal dimension. We should consider what is going on in the heads of these kids. Data now suggests that the higher the stress level is for a kid, the lower his self-esteem is likely to be. The lower the self-esteem, the more the situation is appraised as stressful.

What is the outcome of internal processes? If a student appraises the learning environment to be highly stressful, he might leave school. The consequences might be short- or long-term, but we do know that people who do not complete their educations earn less, have less desirable jobs, and probably have a whole series of social problems throughout their lifetimes.

The point of thinking through this model is to determine what causes a student to drop out. What went wrong in the educational programming? Why didn't we build a student with the right kind of personal characteristics, a student with high self-esteem who can appraise a stressful situation in the proper way, make a proper judgement and act in an appropriate fashion?

We are trying to understand what it is in a kid's environment that leads him to appraise a situation in a certain way and what motivates him positively or negatively. We are trying to understand the schooling experience of an LEP child from a multi-disciplinary perspective and from a contextual interaction model.

In addition to educating children, do schools need to set up intervention programs that also work for the parents? If so, what are the problems that parents have, and are those problems causing the problems the kids are having? Parents who have a whole series of problems cannot effectively help their kids. Perhaps the parents don't have social support, perhaps they don't have access to resources. There may be a good program operating in the school, but if not enough is being done about the environmental stressers, the program cannot operate as well as it might.

With this model you can intervene at different points. You can build skills with teachers, with administrators, with parents, and with kids. You can show people how to be better social supporters and teach them to believe that what happens to them is due, in part, to their own abilities. You can teach concepts of vulnerability, you can teach better coping responses. You can end up with some better outcomes.